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**Public Notice Regarding the Department of Commerce
Environmental Finding For the
Great Plains Dinosaur Museum Project in Malta, Montana**

(HELENA) – House Bill 423, passed during the 2005 Legislature, appropriated \$500,000 to the Department of Commerce to purchase land and construct a museum in Malta, Montana, to display the products of paleontological research in the area.

The Department of Commerce has consulted closely with the Board of Directors of the Judith River Foundation of Malta as the project has proceeded. The Foundation operates the “Dinosaur Field Station” in Malta under the direction of Nate Murphy, Director of Paleontology for the Phillips County Museum. The Department and the Foundation agree that the preferred location for the museum would be adjacent to U.S. Highway 2 to assure maximum accessibility for the traveling public.

With the assistance of a licensed architect, Bruce Davidson, Project Architect with CIVIC Design in Great Falls, the Foundation Board selected a preferred site immediately west of the Phillips County Historical Museum on Highway 2. The County Museum includes displays highlighting the county’s frontier history: the Indian and outlaw days, the mining era in the Little Rockies, the building of the Great Northern Railroad, and the homestead era. The County Museum property includes a two-story museum and the Robinson House, a restored historical home immediately to the east of the museum. The Department and the Foundation believe that if the historical museum and dinosaur museum are located close together there could be a potential “synergy” between the two facilities that would generate additional visitation for both museums. The museums would also share a common parking lot and cooperate on advertising and signage. Current plans for the dinosaur museum provide for an approximately four to five

thousand square foot structure which would allow for expansion at a later date if the Foundation is successful in its continuing fund raising efforts.

Research indicates that the proposed site for the museum has been built on since 1905 and has had a variety of successive uses including a creamery, a warehouse, Meadow Valley Honey, and a residential home which later became a photo studio, a beauty shop, and, most recently, Harms Floral Shop. The Harms Floral Shop is in the process of relocating to a location in the downtown Malta business district. The current property owners will remove the existing buildings before the property is sold to the State.

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